Human Events *A Weekly Analysis for the American Citizen*
Editorial Office 1710 Rhode Island Ave., N. W., WASHINGTON 6, D. C. *Telephone* NATIONAL 2066
VOL. VII, No. 16, *Issue Number* 325, APRIL 19, 1950 *Editor:* FRANK C. HANIGHEN

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA RECEIVED APR 26 1950 LIBRARY

EUROPEAN SOCIALISM IN ECLIPSE

by William Henry Chamberlin

One of the big unnoticed news stories of Europe during the last five years is the eclipse of Socialism as a leading political force. The recent deaths of two outstanding Socialist figures, Harold Laski in Great Britain and Leon Blum in France, coincide with a distinct ebb in the Socialist wave.

There is a good deal of looseness in the word Socialism which calls for definition. Measures which would be denounced as socialistic by a conservative Republican might seem deplorably "bourgeois" to a Communist or a doctrinaire Marxist. And there are many varieties of Socialists, from fellow travellers of the Kremlin to slightly Leftist fellow travellers of the New Deal and the Fair Deal.

By and large, however, Socialism, in the most widely accepted use of the term, is distinguished from Communism by its politics and from capitalism, or individualism, by its economics. The Socialist parties which belonged to the Second International before the First World War were revolutionary in theory, in line with Marx's teachings. But in practice, except in Russia, they had become increasingly reformist. They looked to the ballot-box and to the growing power of the trade-union movement, which in most continental countries was largely under Socialist control, for the realization of their objectives. Those who believed in taking to the barricades and calling general strikes for revolutionary purposes were in the minority.

The Russian Revolution led to a great schism in international Socialism. A Third International, devoted to uncompromising propaganda for Communist revolution, was set up in Moscow and became more and more an instrument of the foreign policy of the Soviet State. The European Socialist parties were split and naturally it was the more ardent revolutionary spirits who went with the Communists.

At the end of the Second World War it seemed that Socialism might be the wave of the future for Europe. The Labor Party had been swept into power by an unprecedented parliamentary majority in Great Britain. A pattern of three-party coalition (Socialists, Communists and Catholics) developed in France, Italy and other West European countries.

Copyright 1950 by HUMAN EVENTS, INC.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Socialists were included in what purported to be coalition governments in the Soviet sphere of influence.

But ever since 1945, Socialism in Europe has been losing ground on two fronts; to Communism east of the Iron Curtain, to reviving economic liberalism in Western Europe. Its sphere of effective influence today has shrunk to Great Britain and Scandinavia. And the recent British election has not left the Labor Party, with its wafer-thin parliamentary majority, in a position to carry through a strong Socialist policy.

It should be noted that the political decline of Socialism has not meant an abandonment of such social welfare measures as unemployment and health insurance, old-age pensions, maternity benefits, etc. These things came to Europe, especially to Germany, before they were widely practiced in the United States. Social welfare has been extended since the war. It is political Socialism with its aims of far-reaching nationalization and State planning that is in decline.

II

In the Iron Curtain countries, the Socialist parties have now lost all possibility of independent political action. They have been swallowed up by the Communists as a result of the application of a familiar Communist technique of mingled coercion and cajolery.

It was possible to exploit sincere fanaticism and fear of "reaction" with some Socialists, while motives of ambition and fear could be worked on in others. Bit by bit the Polish Socialists found themselves completely gleichgeschaltet (to use an expressive Nazi word) in their program, their press, their political activities.

A similar pattern was followed in two other countries where there were strong Socialist parties before the war, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. There were always compliant Socialist leaders to be found, like Szakasits in Hungary and Fierlinger in Czechoslovakia. As soon as free elections were made impossible (in Hungary in the spring of 1947; in Czechoslovakia after February, 1948), the assimilation of the Socialist parties was speeded up.

A forced fusion of the Social Democrats with the Communists in the Soviet zone of Germany in 1946 produced the SED, or Socialist Unity Party. This has been the puppet organization through which Moscow has administered Eastern Germany.

So the independence of East European Socialism has been completely destroyed. It is anyone's guess whether there would be a revival if the Soviet grip on this part of Europe were ever relaxed or broken.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

While the Socialists were being absorbed by the Communist boa-constrictor in the East they were moving from one political defeat to another in the West. They were caught in the cross fire of the cold war and suffered heavy casualties as a result.

The French Communists, although there are some signs that they have passed their political peak, still control the largest trade-union organization and can count on most of the votes of the industrial workers. The Socialists have become increasingly a party of government employees, white-collar workers and intellectuals. And those groups of the French middle class and peasantry who fear and dislike Communism tend to move farther to the Right than the Socialists are willing or able to go.

It is pretty much the same story, with one important variation, in Italy. The French Socialists were never taken over by the Communists, although some small groups have seceded to them. But the majority of the Italian Socialist Party, led by Pietro Nenni, committed hara-kiri by virtually merging themselves with the Italian Communists.

Even in countries where Communism is a minor factor there is often a marked declining tendency in Socialism. It is the Catholic, not the Socialist parties that have headed the polls in recent elections in Germany, Austria and Belgium.

Indeed the idea, so popular with the "non-Communist Left" that America should throw its weight behind Socialism as the only reliable bulwark against Communism is out of line with current European reality. The force that has rallied the continental European masses most effectively against the Communist threat is the Catholic Church.

Consider the situation country by country. The Christian Democrats are easily the strongest party in Italy. The Christian Democratic Union, predominantly, although not entirely Catholic, is the leading party in West Germany. The Social Christian Party is dominant in Belgium. Today, as before the war, the Catholic People's Party is somewhat ahead of the Social Democratic Party in Austria. The Catholic Party is an important factor in the coalition government in the Netherlands. The authoritarian regimes of Franco and Salazar in Spain and Portugal are Catholic. The situation in France is more complex. But it is not without significance that the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Bidault and Schuman, are Catholics and that the head of the militant Rally of the French People, General de Gaulle, is also a Catholic. A spiritual world outlook has proved a stronger resistant force to Communism than any secular political or economic creed.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There are two main reasons for the eclipse of Socialism. One is the polarization of European political life as a result of the cold war between Washington and Moscow. Socialists are unable to align themselves whole-heartedly with America for economic reasons and with the Soviet Union for political reasons and they have not been strong enough to constitute an effective "third force".

The second reason is that State planning and controls have fallen into increasing disrepute as a result of the lessons of experience. Only the British and, to a lesser extent, the Scandinavians, seem to be docile, patient and law-abiding enough to accept rationing as a peacetime way of life.

Elsewhere on the Continent rationing is an unlamented memory; and the countries that do the least planning and rid themselves of most bureaucratic controls are unmistakably the best off. This is certainly true as regards Belgium and Switzerland, the two economically freest and most prosperous countries in Europe.

France and Italy have made conspicuous progress toward economic recovery and financial stability since they scrapped most of their controls. West Germany, despite its many special difficulties, has made spectacular strides since stable currency was introduced and efforts to fix wages and prices, taken over from Hitler's regime by the occupation authorities, were dropped.

The influence of economic liberals in the classical, not the modern sense of that much abused word, is in the ascendant in that part of Europe which is outside the Soviet orbit. Men like Erhard in Germany, Einaudi, the scholarly economist President of Italy, Paul Van Zeeland in Belgium, Paul Reynaud in France, are typical representatives of this tendency.

If this upsurge of economic liberalism is to be permanent, however, the European free enterprise model will have to be overhauled and made freer and more enterprising. The striking off of the shackles of state bureaucracy must be supplemented by the curbing of cartels, price rings and monopolies, by freer competition and more opportunity for the people at the bottom of the social hierarchy. And the full potential benefits of a free competitive economy can only be realized in a much more closely united Europe, freed from exchange controls and, so far as possible, from customs barriers.

Quotation up to a paragraph is permitted with credit to HUMAN EVENTS. For reproduction or more extensive quotation address requests to HUMAN EVENTS, 1710 Rhode Island Avenue, N. W., Washington 6, D. C. Trial subscription, three months for $3. Six months, $5.50. One year, $10. Two years, $18. Domestic airmail (including APO and FPO) one year, $12.00; foreign (regular mail) one year, $11. Foreign airmail rates on request. Please remit in U.S.A. DOLLARS. Allow two weeks for new subscriptions or change of address to become effective.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events Vol. VII, No. 16

APR 26 1950 LIBRARY

By Frank C. Hanighen April 19, 1950

THE ADA AND THE REPUBLICANS: Americans for Democratic Action, that refuge for discarded New Dealers and bleeding-heart malcontents, held its annual convention at the Shoreham Hotel in Washington on March 31 and April 1 and 2. Particularly busy at the conclave was Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., an ornament of the current rhinestone-and-paste school of historians, author of The Age of Jackson, and a leading light among the ADA brain-trusters. Numerous familiar political phenomena characterized this gathering (recognition of Communist China is inevitable; Congressional tactics in investigating Reds are outrageous; fervent applause for Acheson; vituperation for McCarthy; and so forth). But observers noted two developments which deserve more serious consideration than has been previously given.

1. On April 2 the convention voted to sever its openly avowed alliance with Fair Deal Democrats and declared that "we will continue to work for the nomination and election of candidates for public office of whatever party, when their records are consistent with the principles of the ADA". 2. The second item was the strangely coincidental appearance on the very same day (April 2) in the New York Times Magazine of a remarkable article by Schlesinger entitled "The Need for an Intelligent Opposition -- the Republicans can be the true conservatives and still be constructive". Why this sudden divorce from the Democrats? Why this equally sudden wooing of the Republicans, more especially of Senators Wayne Morse and Henry Cabot Lodge. Schlesinger is not alone in blowing kisses at certain groups in the GOP. Marquis Childs, the columnist, has been at it; so has Herbert Agar, former luminary of the OWI and apocalyptic crusader for World War II. Childs burst forth in his syndicated column, and Agar in Harper's at approximately the same time as the ADA meeting. More coincidences!

Is all this merely a case of a crew of "displaced political persons" trying to climb aboard the Republican chariot? Not exactly. The ADA, as we pointed out on February 15, has seduced numerous public figures, some of them Republicans, into its organization of Fabian Socialism. And the capers of Schlesinger and Childs indicate that the writing intelligentsia are pushing a Fabian drive to divide, if not capture the leadership of the GOP. The Congressional campaign offers an excellent opportunity for them. But what are the chances of success?

* * * * *

THE INTELLIGENTSIA AND THE GOP: The arguments are tactically well chosen. Professor Schlesinger selects two promising issues to display both his ignorance and availability. He exhorts the GOP to accept as accomplished historical fact (and worthy and virtuous fact) two developments. One is Reciprocal Trade Agreements. The Trade Agreements Act was first passed in 1934 and for 16 years its machinery has been under the control of the Roosevelt-Truman Administration. The net result has been that the reciprocal tariff reductions of other countries have been nullified by the imposition of currency controls, quotas, bilateral agreements, etc. The entire effort stands as a sham and fraud. But the Trade Agreements have not been effectively debunked by Republicans and remain as one of the sacred cows of all public figures who wish to be known as liberal and progressive.

The second development praised by the Professor is "social welfare" legislation. He says: "The dictate of true conservatism would be to bribe the masses into loyalty, if you will, by assuring them the basic decencies of living." A parlor Hitler could do no better in denying what still, despite the New Deal, constitute the fundamental American beliefs. The Schlesinger appeal is all the more

Copyright 1950 by Human Events, Inc.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

interesting since ADA union stalwarts had just been before the Senate Finance Committee, testifying substantially in favor of the pending Altmeyer Social Security bill, a capricious and outrageously unjust piece of legislation which presumes to promise extended old age benefits and which actually will deny them to literally millions of our old people. But such legislation, even less than the Trade Agreements, has not been debunked, and to oppose it is politically dangerous.

Now most Republicans will recognize the myths in these two appeals. But myths are potent weapons in the hands of slick professors -- particularly when joined to Schlesinger's Machiavellian advice, "bribe the masses". But there are certain Republicans -- Lodge, Tobey, Morse, Governor Dewey -- who are ripe to be seduced. The ADA, unlike the conservative elements, has this potential weapon in its armory: it fully uses the intelligentsia, whose direct and indirect publicity activities did so much to ensure the New Deal. This publicity machine (which, as shown above produced some remarkable "coincidental" articles) is in a position to offer those Republicans who fear the epithet "reactionary" a priceless guerdon -- the attractive designation of "liberal". This ADA development bears watching in coming months.

* * * * *

ACTION IN ATTICA: The bipartisan policy apparently makes GOP "liberals" feel voluptuously noble and constructive. We wonder if this little satisfaction of theirs would decrease if they realized what subservience to the Fair Deal foreign policy involves. Would they meekly remain silent while the procurators of the Fair Deal remove a foreign conservative government and replace it with one of the Left? Well, that is substantially what took place during the past week in the case of Greece. Bitter protests arise from Administration cohorts if conservatives suggest that the course of Socialism in our subsidized province of Britain be stopped by U.S. order. But we have heard no objections in the past week when the American Ambassador in Athens told the Greek Government in effect that it must resign and that the Greeks must place the center of political gravity to the Left side of the party system.

The Government of Venizelos, a Liberal (apparently an old-style liberal) and regarded as comparatively conservative, bowed before Washington's ukase and a new cabinet shuffle placed General Plastiras in power. The General's political support is definitely Left of center. It is interesting to note that the order from the American Ambassador in this charming affair was reinforced by imprecations from the Administrator of ECA funds in Greece. And who was he? None other than Mr. Paul Porter, former head of our OPA, that never-to-be-forgotten agency of totalitarianism. Whatever the reasons given by these American officials, two facts stand out: (1) that the U.S. deliberately forced a change in the constitutional government of Greece; and (2) the change, as specified by the U.S., was from Right to Left. We recommend a study of this extraordinary incident to those Republicans who wish to restore bipartisanism.

* * * * *

MERRIE [SOCIALIST] ENGLAND: The following are passages from a letter written a few weeks ago, on March 13, 1950, by an English chartered accountant who is looking, by mail, for both a job and a haven in the United States:

"About the reasons for my wanting a change. It is not any one item but the slow accumulation of debit items which at length make me say 'Anything for a change.' First of all there is the physical side. We have four children, ages 6 to 13, and it is wearing my wife down to find food for them. At seven o'clock at night she is out on her feet and nothing by way of holiday or entertainment is any pleasure to her because she is too tired to prepare for it or enjoy it. It is not that food is scarce (we get our rations regularly) but that all the small things

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which vary the menu have to be fought for. She is continually on the chase through the shops, cajoling here, reminding there, and so on. There is never any reserve in the house to fall back on. An American friend sent us a ham for Christmas. Was it good? It was. But as good as the taste was the feeling that we had something to fall back on. We entertained friends on the strength of it. Well, if this pressure could be relieved, it would make life much happier. Secondly, our children cannot go to the schools we would like them to go to because places are reserved for State School children by the examination system recently introduced. The County Secondary and other schools we are promised as alternates do not exist yet and may not arrive for many years. Further, with the development of nationalization and planning there will be few opportunities for them except in such industries where conduct and morale is not such as I would wish them to encounter.

"More closely home, two matters affect my business life. Taxation is so high that it is impossible to make provision for old age; and worse than that, taxation is not likely to be reduced by the Labor government because it believes in taxation as a leveling instrument; nor by a Conservative government because they will find difficulty in making ends meet without a high tax rate. Again the progress of nationalization threatens to wipe out 60 per cent of my business. We are losing about 25 per cent on the nationalization of gas and electricity and if all Local Government Superannuation Funds are centralized (on the grounds of uniformity of administration and benefits) the rest will go. Either my partner or myself would then have to find a job, perhaps with a national industry, which would be incompatible with my temperament. My partner has no children and is satisfied to remain. I have set in motion a probe for a job elsewhere.

"I recognize that business conditions may be no better in the U.S. than here though I think you have some way to go to catch up with us, but you do produce your food and you do have lower tax rates. In any case I enjoy encountering new conditions and I should spend a happy few years -- and stimulating ones -- in gaining knowledge of your affairs. Life would, I think, be easier for my wife and offer more opportunities for my children. It would be a great wrench to leave and we may have some painful adjustments to make, but if an opening does occur with sufficiently attractive prospects, I think we should take it."

* * * * *

SPREAD OF FEDERAL GRANTS: (Edna Lonigan reports from Capitol Hill.) Senator Cain's denunciation of Time's attack on him, calls needed attention to ECA contributions to our newspapers and magazines for distribution abroad. ECA "guaranties" for 1949 are estimated at $2.8 million; for 1950, at $10 million. Beneficiaries in 1949 included Time, Newsweek, the Post, Collier's, the Ladies Home Journal, the Woman's Home Companion, and one newspaper, the New York Herald Tribune. The Treasury wanted to make grants to newspapers during the war but the press resisted. ECA grants may be well administered, but in principle they are subsidies. Once huge Government funds are used to buy some writing, and leave the rest to the shrinking private market, there is danger of censorship.

These grants raise another issue. The Administration has been rapidly extending the idea of grants from government to private agencies. We have grants for construction of hospitals, a wide variety of grants for colleges and schools, proposed grants for Blue Cross, and under Point Four to foreign missions. Grants in aid are the acceptance of Federal funds in exchange for Federal control of policy. To take Federal money is to take Federal guidance, whether the beneficiaries are states, schools, industry or foreign missions. When private associations become dependent on government, the system outlined in our Constitution is ended. This spread of grants is therefore a Constitutional issue, which needs a full airing before our private associations have become conditioned to government subsidy.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Book Events

Marti: Apostle of Freedom, by Jorge Manach, translated from the Spanish by Coley Taylor. New York: Devin-Adair Company. $4.50. Reviewed by Frank Chodorov.

Before the modern flair for analytical psychology took over, let us say since Plutarch, the business of biography was to construct an image of a man out of the known facts of his career: what he said, did and wrote, against the background of his environment. The emotional reaction of the biographer toward his subject, as in the case of Boswell, necessarily colored the reproduction, and his own ideational predispositions influenced his judgment, as a Southern biographer would admire in Jeff Davis what a Northerner would deprecate. Severely objective writing is possible only in a mathematics textbook. At any rate, biography never attempted, before the modern era, to go behind the returns, to dig into the unknown mechanism of the evasive subconscious for mysterious motivations for what the man did or said or wrote. Biography was not a thesis in psychology; it gave the reader the picture of a man, not an imaginative diagram of his supposed inner workings.

For readers who like biography, and prefer the prepsychological genre, the story of Marti: Apostle of Freedom, offers both entertainment and instruction, if not inspiration. It is the story of a poet and a revolutionist, which is something of a redundancy, for the daring imagination that drives one to revolt is a necessary ingredient of the poetic mind. It is the story of Jose Marti, the Cuban who not only gave his life for the liberation of his country, but whose verse and prose kept alive the flame of freedom in his oft dispirited countrymen. Perhaps, as our economic determinists would have it, Cuba was destined to throw off the Spanish yoke; the fact is that the catalytic agency for destiny at that particular time was the genius of this man.

Even in translation, the bits of poetry carefully selected by the scholarly biographer, Jorge Manach, give insight into the soul that drew to it in common cause the expatriated cigar makers of Florida, the rich importers of New York, the farmers of Central America and the Negroes who, though not as much as in this country, had achieved a lower caste status in Cuban society. The gift of oratory was in him too, and the snatches of it that Manach appropriately introduces into the story are still thrilling; one understands why the patriots entrusted to him their money and their loyalty. Even the military leaders came to love and admire this frail and exotic young man, whose capacity for administration measured up to his powers of inspiration. He came by leadership without aspiring to it.

Marti was more than a revolutionist; he worked for a politically independent Cuba -- independent of the United States as well as of Spain -- but recognized the necessity of social equality among Cubans as a condition for true freedom. He decried race and class disabilities and preached the dignity of the individual; he warned against narrow nationalism; he spoke in terms that suggest modern Pan-Americanism and good neighborliness. To Americans of Iberian backgrounds, as Manach puts it, Marti is still "the voice of a great teacher for whom political liberty was only the prerequisite for a freedom more profound: The freedom of the spirit, the sovereignty of a man in his own conscious, and the sovereignty of peoples in their own culture to live a life of moral and material independence in which they can be true to themselves and to the spirit of their own genius".

Manach makes Marti live again, which is what good biography should do. And of necessity he retells much of the story of "Cuba Libre", which is a vital part of our own history during the latter part of the Nineteenth and early part of the Twentieth centuries. On both counts, to say nothing of its literary merit, the book is good reading.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED